NARON
≠AUIN
NOGAU

[70 cont.]

881 Among the Naron, on the other hand, they must first pass the hunting test before they are admitted to the boys' initiation. Ten or 12 candidates are taken into the bush and must live for a month on veldkost, which is sprinkled with a medicine by the doctor before it is eaten. Women are not allowed to come near the camp.

During one of the nocturnal dances, Hise appears, dances [776] around the circle, and is then driven away by the medicine man. (767) Some say Hise looks like a woman; others describe him as a be- 535 ing three feet tall, with a flat head, large eyes, black body, 881 wings and claws (one is reminded of the spirit bird Engororí, which appears at the initiation of the Ovambo, or of the Neida Gamaseb of the Bergdama).

Some old ≠Auin saw two beings, one male and one female, 787 who looked like lions but walked upright; they were followed by children who looked like baboons.

Evidently masked dances, are involved here. The younger 535 men no longer see this Hise; the doctors explain to them that he 881 came, but could only be seen by the medicine men.

A special dance for Hise is an imitation of a bird's movements. In olden times the people also danced in pairs, while they sang in refrain: "Ostrich stomach, Hise stomach, hu, hu, hu."

The /Di dance is likewise dedicated to Hise. At this dance the men wear the dance rattles described above, as is also done for profane dances, but in addition they wear white or black ostrich feathers.

3. The Girls' Initiation

Among the Nogau when a girl has her first menstruation, 881 there is a celebration. Throughout the first day the girl must stay [343] in a closed, arbor-like pontok especially constructed for her. She is only given something to drink, nothing to eat. The women gather from far and near and perform dances around this arbor. These festivities last for five days, and only one man is present as a leader of the ceremony. During these five days the girl is regarded as "poisonous" and may not touch anything, not even

companions saying, " I dare not speak to you." The married women visit the *ǂkham-khoidi oms* and instruct the inmates in various domestic matters, *e.g.*, the way to clean and tidy their huts, to remain quiet when their husbands are cross, to prepare their husbands' food separately from their own, to pick up and beat the kudu skin on returning home in the evening so that the husband does not sleep on the previous day's dirt, etc. They further teach them to gather wood, to make the fire, to take away the ashes and so forth. At the onset of the first menstruation the girl tells her mother or, in case she has no mother, her best friend (*/hosas*), who then reports to one of the married women, not necessarily to the *gei-khois*. She is then isolated in a small round hut which is completely closed in except for a small entrance. It is known as the */hawa-omi* (hut for waiting) and is situated close to the *ǂkham-khoidi oms*. She is required to remain inside the */hawa-omi* and dare not show herself outside. No fire is made in the hut. She is fed by her mother or, in the absence of the latter, by another married woman. She is not visited by anybody except the person who feeds her. No medicine is given to her. Daily applications of */gũb*, a red powder obtained by pulverising the bark of a tree, and of the roasted and powdered fat-containing seed of the *ǂerob* tree are made to her hair by the attendant. She may be given veldkos, but is not allowed to partake of meat. No man, not even the girl's father, may pass close to the */hawa-omi* or attempt to speak to her. She remains in the */hawa-omi* as long as the flow lasts. When it has ceased she informs her mother or the woman who has been attending her. The latter tells the other married women and they all prepare to dance the */hawa-ǂnab* (menstruation dance). This dance takes place during the day and men may not take part in it. They may, however, remain in the *//gãus* while it is going on or enter it when returning from the veld. The *ǂkham-khoidi* are also excluded from it. The */hawa-ǂnab* may be continued for three or four days. When the dance is about to begin an old woman, generally the *gei-khois*, holding a jackal tail duster, takes up a position some distance in front of the */hawa-omi*, and, dancing in one spot as if marking time, shouts *Ki-ri-ri-ri-ri-ri* to waken the initiate and to summon the other women. The latter then emerge from their huts and, dancing as they come along, take up position behind the */hawa-omi*. Two of them dance forward, passing one on each side of the little hut, towards its entrance and, as they reach the latter, the initiate comes out and the old woman stops shouting. After covering her whole head and face with a duiker skin kaross (*/gan-tab*), leaving only the eyes visible, each of the women takes an arm and, the other women coming into line from behind the hut, all dance towards the old woman who leads the way to the */hara-ǂgab*. Here they dance, the feet being thrown out sideways, always abreast of each other, with the old woman leading. Men are not permitted to watch the dance. When the dance is about to end they return her to